



Feral Swine Monitoring

Conservation Activity Job Sheet, AL297

Landowner:		Farm #:
Field/Stand(s):	Acres:	Tract #:
Map(s):		County:
Designed By:		Contact Information:
Date:		

PURPOSE:

This job sheet has three functions.

- 1) Provide information regarding population assessments using trail cameras. This information may be used as a guide for removal.
- 2) Provide information on pre and post swine removal habitat damage assessments. This may be an indicator of whether the management strategy is achieving its objectives.
- 3) Provide a checklist of **required actions** by participant.

ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION:

Monitoring and scouting will help focus management strategies on imperiled natural resources and avoid targeting management activities in areas where it is not necessary.

- Effective monitoring and scouting **prior** to implementing management actions—an assessment of populations and baseline resource conditions—is required to determine what type of damage exists, where feral swine populations are concentrated, how regularly they are visiting population monitoring stations, and how many individuals are visiting each station.
- Effective monitoring and scouting **after** implementing management actions—an evaluation—is required to determine when feral swine populations have been reduced to a level where other conservation practices can be successfully installed to address resource concerns. Data collection and monitoring methods should remain the same during the assessment and evaluation period to allow comparison of before-management and after management implementation results.

Choosing a camera location can be simplified by looking for trails used by pigs. Often, pigs use trees to scratch and rub mud off of their sides, leaving clear evidence in the form of mud covered tree trunks. It is recommended that several bait buckets be filled with corn and water and placed in different locations near trails. The water soaked corn begins to sour, which makes it undesirable for non-target species such as deer and raccoons. It also gives off a powerful scent which attracts pigs. Check bait buckets once a week. When one is knocked over, then that is an indication of a good location to place the cameras and bait station. Success of baiting for population assessment can be inconsistent during periods of quality food availability. Avoid setting up cameras during peak acorn fall, for example. Also avoid times when nearby favored crops, such as corn and peanuts, are at stages that are preferred by pigs.

Build trap (or use existing trap—MUST meet NRCS trap specifications) and place feeder inside to begin pre-baiting. Set cameras to show outside of trap, as pigs often wander around the outside giving good photo opportunities. Be

sure to set one camera showing the entrance to the trap. Wire the door of the trap in the open position and scatter bait on the ground inside of the trap. Many non-target species, such as raccoons and opossums, feed at night. Therefore it is best to set feeder timer to go off early each morning. Feeder can be any style of feeder, but hanging feeders work best since those with legs tend to sustain damage from trapped pigs. Feeder must be large enough to hold enough bait to last one week. Refill feeder and check cameras at least once each week to ensure proper functioning, change batteries and to download photos. Follow state laws regarding baiting for feral swine in areas where deer and turkey hunting will be allowed.

Monitor cameras long enough to collect information regarding pig movement patterns, total number in the sounder and individual characteristics as much as possible. This is critical information to use in determining when to set the trap. Follow trapping procedures outlined in Alabama NRCS **Wild Pig Trapping Job Sheet AL645-G** specifications: <http://efotg.sc.egov.usda.gov/references/public/AL/645G.pdf>. Set trap only after all individuals in the sounder are regularly feeding inside the trap several days in a row. Captured pigs must be humanely euthanized while still inside the trap. Please note that Alabama state law **expressly prohibits** moving live trapped pigs under **any** circumstances.

NRCS Requirements:

Provide participant with conservation plan

Provide the participant with specifications for trap, feeder and camera(s)

Review program requirements and data sheets with the participant

Participant Checklist (requirements for Environmental Quality Incentives Program [EQIP]). Participant to Check Each Item Below:

- Do an on the ground assessment of each habitat type noted in Appendix 3. Complete initial assessment of damage on data sheet provided.
- Complete Auburn University Questionnaire regarding pig damage on your land (Appendix 5).
- Provide written proof of attendance of one of the Wild Pig Management Seminar Training Sessions hosted by Auburn University Extension, USDA APHIS, Alabama Department of Conservation and USDA NRCS. Participant may substitute proof of working directly with approved wildlife biologist or other knowledgeable person approved by the NRCS state wildlife biologist who has attended one of these wild pig seminars or has personal experience trapping pigs. Biologist may from AI Department of Conservation, Alabama Wildlife Federation, USDA NRCS, USDA APHIS, Auburn Extension or other non-profit entity as approved by NRCS state wildlife biologist.
- Identify camera locations. Complete first part of the Camera Data Sheet (Appendix 1).
- Install feeder and begin pre-baiting of area.
- Purchase and install camera(s) meeting NRCS specifications. KEEP RECEIPTS, since they will need to be turned into NRCS. Choice of using 2 to 3 standard trail cameras of at least 8 megapixels OR one data transmitting camera. If choosing standard cameras, then 2 cameras are the minimum requirement. Three cameras may be recommended in certain situations. Data transmitting camera = camera that is capable of sending pictures in real time to cell phone or other device. Note—data transmitting cameras normally require a monthly cell phone data charge in addition to the cost of the camera.
- Install trap per Alabama NRCS **Wild Pig Trapping Job Sheet AL645-G** specs. Existing trap can be used ONLY if it meets specifications in job sheet: <http://efotg.sc.egov.usda.gov/references/public/AL/645G.pdf>. Be sure to securely wire trap door in the open position while pre-baiting the trap.
- Document trail camera photos on second part of Camera Data Sheet (Appendix 1).

APPENDIX 1

CAMERA DATA SHEET

Landowner or Property _____

SITE (FARM NUMBER)		DATE	DATE RETRIEVED
OBSERVER(S)		LOCATION	
LOCATION DESCRIPTION (SPECIFIC HABITAT) *NOTE-TRAP MUST BE LOCATED IN AREA THAT HAS SHADE THROUGHOUT THE DAY			
BROAD HABITAT TYPE—(If row crops, pasture and woodland are all present, then check something under each)			
Agriculture	Pasture/Grazing	Woodland	Livestock (check all on your farm)
<input type="checkbox"/> Cotton <input type="checkbox"/> Peanuts <input type="checkbox"/> Soybeans <input type="checkbox"/> Corn <input type="checkbox"/> Wheat <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify)	<input type="checkbox"/> Improved grasses <input type="checkbox"/> Native grasses <input type="checkbox"/> Hayfield <input type="checkbox"/> Other	<input type="checkbox"/> Pine/Hardwood Mix <input type="checkbox"/> Hardwood <input type="checkbox"/> Pine <input type="checkbox"/> Riparian Buffer <input type="checkbox"/> Swamp <input type="checkbox"/> Other	<input type="checkbox"/> Cattle <input type="checkbox"/> Pigs <input type="checkbox"/> Goats <input type="checkbox"/> Sheep <input type="checkbox"/> Poultry <input type="checkbox"/> Other
CAMERA 1		CAMERA TYPE	GPS COORDINATES
CAMERA DIRECTION (Pointing N, S, E or W)		DATE	BAIT TYPE
CAMERA SETTINGS			
CAMERA 2		CAMERA TYPE	GPS COORDINATES
CAMERA DIRECTION (Pointing N, S, E or W)		DATE	BAIT TYPE
CAMERA SETTINGS			
CAMERA 3		CAMERA TYPE	GPS COORDINATES
CAMERA DIRECTION (Pointing N, S, E or W)		DATE	BAIT TYPE
CAMERA SETTINGS			

APPENDIX 2

Swine Removals

Location: _____

Date	*Whole Sounder Removed? (YES/NO)	Total Number of Feral Swine Removed	Number of Sows	Number of Boars	Number of Juveniles

*Was whole sounder (documented in trail camera photos) removed? If not, then start pre-baiting cycle over and reset trap.

APPENDIX 3

Habitat Damage Evaluation Form

Pre-Removal Assessment to be Completed before Installing Bait Stations

Check Each Existing Land Use on the Property	Habitat Present on Property	Check Each Land Use that has Wild Pig Damage	Additional Information
	Pasture/Hay Fields		
	Cropland		
	Upland Forested Areas		
	Wildlife Openings		
	Riparian Areas/Floodplains		
	Streams, Ponds, Lakes*		
	Wetlands		
	Other Sensitive Areas (Specify)		

*Note- Damage to streams, ponds and lakes would be to the area under water or to the immediate adjoining streambank.

APPENDIX 4

Post-Control Habitat Damage Evaluation Form

Post-Removal Assessment—Include ONLY New Damage Viewed After Pig Removal

Check Each Land Use Present on Property	Land Use	Check Each Land Use that has NEW Pig Damage	If Damage is Found, then What is the Extent of Damage Compared to <u>Pre-Removal Evaluation?</u>		
			Less Damage	About the Same	More Damage
	Pasture/Hay Fields				
	Cropland				
	Upland Forested Areas				
	Wildlife Openings				
	Riparian Areas/Floodplains				
	Streams, Ponds, Lakes*				
	Wetlands				
	Other Sensitive Areas (Specify)				

*Note- Damage to streams, ponds and lakes would be the area under water or to the immediate adjoining streambank.

APPENDIX 5

Alabama Feral Swine Survey

The NRCS is conducting a project to determine the status of feral swine activity and management efforts in Alabama. As part of that project, wildlife specialist from the Alabama Cooperative Extension System are collecting information related to the history, amount of activity, and your feeling concerning feral swine on your property. The information collected will be used to develop educational programs and materials to help you make better management decisions. Thank you for participating in the feral swine survey.

Jeff Thurmond, Certified Wildlife Biologist and Registered Forester, NRCS

Dr. Jim Armstrong, Certified Wildlife Biologist and Wildlife Specialist, Alabama Cooperative Extension System

1. In which county is property located? _____
2. How long have you noticed feral swine activity on your property? (Circle one)
 more than 10 years 5 to 10 years 1 to 5 years less than 1 year
3. In the time since you first noticed the pig activity, has the activity (Circle one)
 Increased decreased remained the same
4. Which of the following statements best describes your feelings about wild pigs? (Check one)
 ___ A. I like having feral swine on my property.
 ___ B. I do not like having feral swine on my property.

4A. If A, what activities have you conducted to encourage feral swine on your property (Circle all that apply)
 None Not allowed shooting Planted food plots for wild pigs Other
 If "Other," please describe: _____

4B. If B, what activities have you conducted to discourage feral swine on your property (Circle all that apply). In the blank by the activity, indicate the number of pigs killed as a result of the activity.
 None Shooting _____ Trapping _____ Other _____
 If "Other," please describe: _____

5. On a scale of 1 to 5 (1=Strongly Disagree; 2=Disagree, 3=Neutral, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly Agree), please rate each of the following statements.

	<u>SD</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>SA</u>
1. I want to keep pigs on my property.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I do not want pig on my property.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I enjoy hunting feral swine.	1	2	3	4	5
4. We should kill as many wild pigs as possible.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Feral swine are doing serious damage to my property.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Shooting is the best way to control feral swine.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Trapping is the best way to control feral swine.	1	2	3	4	5

6. We are trying to determine the extent of damage and the economic impact of damage by wild pigs. To help us do so, please check all that apply and provide an estimate in acres of damage, and then estimate the economic loss associated with each category.

a. ___ 1. I have not experienced any property damage from wild pigs. (If checking #1, then please skip to question #7)

b. ___ 2. Crop Damage:

- i. Type of Crop _____, number of acres _____, \$ _____
- ii. Type of Crop _____, number of acres _____, \$ _____
- iii. Type of Crop _____, number of acres _____, \$ _____
- iv. Type of Crop _____, number of acres _____, \$ _____
- v. Type of Crop _____, number of acres _____, \$ _____

c. ___ 3. Pasture Damage: number of acres _____, \$ _____

d. ___ 4. Wildlife Food Plot Damage:

- i. Type of food planting _____ number of acres _____, \$ _____

e. ___ 5. Tree Damage:

- i. Type _____, number of acres _____, \$ _____
- ii. Type _____, number of acres _____, \$ _____
- iii. Type _____, number of acres _____, \$ _____
- iv. Timber stand type examples; newly planted longleaf, mature hardwood, loblolly plantation, etc.

f. ___ 6. Damage to equipment (tractor, etc.) due to feral swine activity (i.e. equipment damaged driving through field made hazardous by heavy rooting damage). Also include damage to fences, gates, etc.

- i. Type of Damage _____, \$ _____
- ii. Type of Damage _____, \$ _____
- iii. Type of Damage _____, \$ _____
- iv. Type of Damage _____, \$ _____

7. Do you feel that feral swine have had any impact on native wildlife? (Circle one). Yes No
If Yes, please describe:

Thank You!